

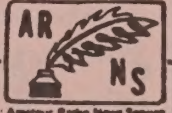
W5YI REPORT

Up to the minute news from the worlds of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable. May be reproduced providing credit is given to The W5YI Report.

Dits & Bits

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Coordination Policy Pits Ham Against Ham

The Commission has denied Joseph A. Wolos, WA1OCK, (Springfield, Massachusetts) reconsideration of an FCC May 2, 1986, action amending Part 97 of the rules to clarify the relationships between coordinated and noncoordinated stations in repeater and auxiliary amateur operation.

In seeking reconsideration, Wolos contended that deletion of certain rule provisions (Section §97.67[c] and Appendix 5), which were not specifically addressed in the rule-making notice required a separate notice and comment proceeding. Part §97.67[c] and Appendix 5 previously contained guidelines for effective radiated (repeater) power related to antenna height above average terrain and topographic map requirements. These were removed from the rules without prior notice to the amateur community.

Wolos said that coordinators could now disregard the previous e.r.p. limits that were in the rules. The potential now is to allow 1,500 watt repeater power which would cause serious co-channel interference, he noted.

Wolos also sought uniform band plans, definitions of "local" and "regional" coordination, and an appeal process for parties denied coordination. Wolos said that there was no indication in the new "definitions" of what "local" or "regional" coordination really meant. "There is no indication how a dispute

will be solved between one frequency coordinator and another." He mentioned that the policies of adjacent coordinating bodies are frequently not compatible.

The Commission said Wolos' petition "raised no procedural or substantive grounds which warranted reconsideration." Pointing out that notice had been given of its intention to take action regarding repeater coordination, the FCC said "removal of paragraph (c) from Section §97.67 and Appendix 5 from §Part 97 represented a logical outgrowth of its initial proposal."

The FCC said Wolos other concerns merely repeated his earlier comments. His suggestions of uniform band plans had been considered and rejected in the Report and Order. "The terms 'local' and 'regional', the Commission said, "are not terms of art and in this context, were descriptive rather than determinative."

The Commission disagreed with Wolos' claim that "amateur repeater coordinators had become de facto licensing agents since coordinators had the power to decide who can operate a repeater. The present system precludes due process to all amateurs and creates a system by which the coordinators and their buddies may receive preferential treatment." Wolos said that amateurs must be afforded an appeal mechanism to coordinator decisions.

The FCC pointed out that repeaters are not separately licensed; consequently, coordinator decisions do not affect the licensing process.

Wolos said that one of the reasons he filed his Petition for Reconsideration is that more than one group can (and frequently do) claim to be the legitimate coordinating body with no means of settling the dispute.

● Take, for example, the situation that exists in Southern California. The 220-SMA (Spectrum Management Association) of Southern California is generally thought to be the proper coordinator for 220 MHz repeaters. It is their coordinations that are listed in the ARRL Repeater Directory which is more or less considered the de facto repeater coordination authority.

Another group, the 220 FCC (Frequency Management Commission) has fairly recently appeared and also claims to be the proper California coordinator. (See Vol. 8, Issue 23). Karl Pagel, N6BVU, president of 220-SMA, maintains that his group has been the 220-MHz coordinator since 1979 and that the 220-FCC arrived on the scene only in the last few months. The 220-FCC is apparently headed up by a Lewis DePayne/KA6RBJ and Daniel Granda/KA6VHC. It appears that they formed the 220-FCC and then grandfathered their two long-standing uncoordinated repeaters in as coordinated.

We wrote about the matter in our December 1st issue. We tried to reach Daniel Granda, but he has an unlisted telephone. During early January we received a certified letter from Lewis DePayne (believed to be the self-appointed president of 220-FCC) threatening legal action if we did not retract our "defamatory statements." We tried to telephone DePayne but he has no telephone listed at his Call Book address - nor is there a listing in Southern California for the 220-Frequency Coordinating Commission.

Other letters threatening legal action were sent by DePayne to Karl Pagel/N6BVU, president of the 220-SMA, to Bill Paster-nak/WA5ITF who reported on the matter in Westlink and to Dave Sumner/K1ZZ, Executive
(Continued on Page #4)

STATUS OF AMATEUR RADIO RULEMAKING

Three FCC Rulemaking issues were to have taken effect by now - all seem to be in various stages of delay. Effective January 1, question pools were turned over to the various VEC's for future revision. The ARRL has requested a "stay of the rules" pending a ruling on their September Petition for Reconsideration asking that the FCC continue to revise the amateur radio operator written examinations.

Some of the amateur press had publicized that "Novice Enhancement" would be a "Christmas present" for the Amateur community - but we are still waiting. Credit for written amateur radio operator examinations was to have taken effect December 15th but was temporarily postponed.

I called Ray Kowalski, Chief of the FCC's Special Service Division on Friday, January 9th to get a status update.

VEC REVISION OF THE QUESTION POOLS....

I asked Ray just what are the essential elements of a "Stay" and how does it differ from a Petition for Reconsideration. "A Request for Stay Pending Review is a legal maneuver whereby a person who thinks that the FCC will eventually see it their way asks the Commission not to let a particular decision go into effect until the Commission has had a chance to review the argument that they are making," Ray said.

"The requirements to have an action stayed by the Commission is that the petitioning party must demonstrate that there will be irreparable injury caused by this action going into effect and also that they also have a substantial chance of prevailing on the merits when the Commission gets around to reviewing the argument."

"The Commission has not acted on the ARRL's Request for a Stay in the question pool proceeding, so it has gone into effect."

I commented to Ray that a recent FCC Public Notice (issued December 19th) stated that the Commission expected all VEC's to

"I am a currently licensed Extra Class amateur radio operator and wish to be a volunteer examiner. I have never had my station or

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honor the agreements made at the 1986 Conference of VEC's. One of these commitments was that no question pools would be revised by VEC's until January 30, 1988 ...except for revisions caused by rule amendments or typographical errors.

The participants at that conference (held August 8, 1986) represented 45 of the 76 regional VEC's and 93% of the examinations coordinated between May and October 1986 when 21,706 persons were administered operator examinations under the VEC system.

Ray said the purpose of the Public Notice was to alert and caution VEC's who did not attend that meeting. "It was to point out that our expectation is that all VEC's should consider themselves bound by the actions of the majority who did attend. I would think that we will be imminently acting on the ARRL's Request for Stay ...within the next couple of weeks."

NOVICE ENHANCEMENT RULING NEARING....

On the Novice Enhancement matter, Ray said "The (FCC) staff has completed action on the document for the Commission's decision. The document now takes its place in line for consideration by the Commissioners. The staff completed its work on schedule and the change in the Bureau's top management had no effect on the staff meeting its deadline.

The change Kowalski mentions, of course, is the appointment of a new Chief and Deputy Chief in the Private Radio Bureau of which the Special Services Division is a part. Amateur Ralph A. Haller, N4RH, joins newly appointed Chief Mike T. N. Fitch as his deputy. Fitch was previously deputy to Bob Foosner who resigned to accept a legal position in the private sector. Haller holds a degree in electrical engineering, while Fitch is both an engineer and a lawyer. Both have been with the FCC about 15 years in various capacities.

"The process (of getting Novice Enhancement before the Commissioners) involves preparing a transmittal memorandum from the staff to the Commission explaining what actions are being taken and preparing a

document for the Commissioners to adopt and release to the public if they agree with the staff's analysis. That process was completed before the end of the calendar year."

"It is hard to say just when the Commission will get to this. There are a myriad of other documents that other Bureaus have submitted to the Commission for their consideration. Speaking only as a personal estimate, I would not think that we would see any action on this before the middle of next month."

I asked Ray if the FCC did adopt some form of Novice Enhancement, how quickly would that go into effect? "Routinely, something like that I would say would have an effective date of fairly quickly ...more quickly than not. Sometimes we take action that requires people to make changes ...so we postpone the effective date. In this case, should the Commission adopt some kind of enhanced privileges it will have a fairly fast effective date simply because there is no reason why there should not be."

I also questioned Kowalski on two recent amateur radio related submissions to the Office of Management and Budget. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, OMB must review and clear all government public information requests. One of these submissions is a new FCC Form 610 (Application for Amateur License) that provides blanks for indicating credit for written examinations - and possibly two lines (instead of one) for VE's to certify qualifications of new Novice operators. The ARRL had requested two General Class and higher volunteer examiners be required to certify new "voice class" Novices.

The other submission to OMB is a cryptic amateur radio license extension. Ray said that the FCC was not considering allowing household members to operate under the authority of any existing amateur's license as rumored. The "extension" probably is nothing more complicated than allowing existing Technician Class operators to be "grandfathered" into any new authorized Novice voice privileges.

While not going into detail, Ray did confirm that the two OMB submissions were

indeed linked to Novice Enhancement. "OMB prefers that we begin the (form revision) process at the time we release a Notice of Proposed Rule Making," he added. "It is only prudent that we begin clearing all potential form changes as early as possible. We would delay the effective date of the Commission's action in the event any action taken does not agree with the various form changes that are cleared. We would then do the process again."

Kowalski declined to say what form changes are being requested "since this gets into the merits of the issue." (We also had a conversation this past week with veteran PRB staffer, Maurice J. DePont who wrote the Novice Enhancement" document. DePont is also the author of the rule amendment that permits VEC's to maintain the various question pools.)

(Continued from Page #2)

Vice President of the League. DePayne says his group "does now and forever assume supreme authority for all repeater coordination in the state of California and does hereby forbid the ARRL from publishing any listing of repeaters operating in the state of California which have been sent to it by any other repeater coordination body..." DePayne further demands that he approve all California repeater listings prior to publication.

In a letter sent to the ARRL, DePayne has instructed his attorney, David C. Roberts (Los Angeles) to institute suit against the ARRL, its directors and members for "\$1 million in punitive damages as suffered by my organization based on the failure of the ARRL to properly publish in its Repeater Directory listings of 220-FCC coordinated repeater stations."

There is also a dual coordination situation in the Kansas City area (See Vol. 8, Issue 23, Page 3). We asked the FCC's Ray Kowalski for his views on the matter.

"What is happening is the process is being to take effect," he said, "the process of repeater coordination and determining who are the legitimate coordinators. There appears to be some controversy in these two communities as to who is the rightful repeater coordinator."

"Amateurs themselves will make the determination as to who is the rightful coordinator. The "amateurs" are those eligible to establish repeaters - all amateurs technician class and above - who are in the area claimed to be coordinated by the particular coordinator. This is the only way that we (the FCC) can tell (who the coordinators are) - and, by and large, throughout the country there is no dispute. The coordinators are very well known. In a few areas, however, there may be groups attempting to be ...or retain the job of repeater coordination.

"Then we also have the problem of the bogus coordinator. The person - or persons - who set themselves up as coordinators and coordinate themselves. So we have those three sets of circumstances that could possible come into play."

- Over 40 million VCR's have been sold since 1979 ...13.8 million in the last 12 months alone! (40% of all TV households have them.) Next year VCRs will outsell color TVs and there will be more VCR than cabled homes. A.C. Nielsen, the ratings people, have developed a system that can tell what a TV viewer is watching on a VCR. Home video cassette retail sales and rentals are also skyrocketing ...1986 estimated at \$7.2 billion.

- It looks like the FCC will be putting bucks into the U.S. treasury instead of being a drain on it! On April 1st, the Commission begins collecting license application fees (from \$20 for a routine license renewal to \$18,000 for approval to launch and operate a satellite.) New AM radio stations will pay \$2,000, \$1,800 for FM. Commission expects to collect some \$35 million in "cost-of-regulation" fees. Fee schedule will be modified every two years based on the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index. Non-commercial educational radio/television and amateur radio stations are exempt.

- Jerry Gastil Extra Class K6DYD, (Point Loma, California) was fined \$750 for operating a pirate broadcast station on 7434 kHz. during early 1986. Gastil used the alias "Doctor Demento" while on the air as the "Voice of the Pacific Southwest" with the unauthorized call sign KIWI. Gastil was also fined \$50 on July 5, 1985, for operating a repeater station in San Diego without proper identification.

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The W5YI Report, even though a VEC in all regions
The W5YI Report, even though a VEC in all regions

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January 15, 1987

OCTOBER 1986 VE PROGRAM STATISTICS...

	<u>October 1985</u>	<u>1986</u>
No. VE's	77	75
No. Test Sessions:	294	388
ARRL	57.0% (1986)	
W5YI	18.6%	
DeVRY	7.2%	
CVEC	7.2%	
Others	10.0%	
Year-to-Date Test Sessions:	2,644	3,148
Elements Administered:	4,246	5,167
ARRL	58.6% (1986)	
W5YI	12.3%	
CVEC	7.3%	
DeVRY	6.3%	
Others	15.5%	
Year-to-Date Elem. Admin.:	52,781	53,178
No. Applicants Tested:	2,918	3,522
ARRL	57.8% (1986)	
W5YI	13.7%	
DeVRY	6.7%	
CVEC	6.4%	
Others	15.4%	
Year-to-Date Appl. Tested:	34,892	36,495
Pass/Upgrade Rate, All:	57.4%	58.2%
Pass/Upgrade Rate, W5YI:	67.3%	52.4%
Applicants Per Session, All:	9.9	9.1
Applicants Per Session, W5YI:	7.6	7.2
No. Elements Per Applicant:	1.46	1.47
No. Sessions Per VEC:	3.82	5.17

PUBLIC NOTICE ISSUED ON VEC PROGRAM

The Personal Radio Branch of the FCC recently sent out a Public Notice commenting that "VEC's (Volunteer Examiner Coordinators) have coordinated 6,784 sessions where 86,533 persons were administered examinations for amateur radio operator licenses. These examinations were administered between December 1, 1983 — the start of the VEC system — and October 31, 1986."

"Seventy-five regional VEC's have entered into agreements with the FCC to coordinate the efforts of volunteer examiners in preparing and administering examinations for Technician, General, Advanced and Amateur Extra operator licenses. Three VE's administer each examination. There was an average of 4.18 examination sessions per VEC during the first 10 months of 1986, with a average of 11.59 persons examined per session."

"VEC's and VE's are doing outstanding work in screening applications. The number of defective applications forwarded to the FCC from the VEC's over the past year was less than 0.5%. Their best month was December 1985, when 3,651 applications were submitted without even one error. Over 97% of the applications are received on time."

(Editors Note: This is not to say that there have not been some problems! At least one national-in-scope VEC is 'out-of-business.' The Metroplex VEC accounted for just about all of the October VE program errors. Eight sessions were late filed and nearly half of these applications had errors according to the FCC's October VE/VEC program report. Metroplex apparently ran into some 'problems' in mid-summer that were not straightened out until fall. We understand that Metroplex no longer coordinates any VE tests.)

TELECONFERENCE RADIO NETWORK....

Wayne Green, W2NSD/1, will be the special guest speaker on the next North American Teleconference Radio Net (TRN) to be aired over 250 "gateway" stations - mostly VHF/UHF repeaters - on Friday, January 23, 1987.

TRN begins at 9:00 p.m. EST (0200 UTC, January 24.) Stations are tied together via a teleconference bridge donated by the Darome Connection and the Honeywell Corporation. Never at a loss for words (or ideas), Wayne will speak on his favorite subject ...how to get ham radio rolling again!

DX-COLVINS OPERATE FROM THE COMOROS

We received the following note from YASME DXers Lloyd and Iris Colvin (W6KG & W6QL) around Christmastime.

"We have just completed our operation as FH/W5KG and made 8,000 QSO's with amateur radio stations in 144 countries. We stayed in a small hotel on top of a hill overlooking Mayotte Island in the Indian Ocean."

"There are no embassies or consulates here, so we could do very little to arrange for our next stop. They have a requirement in

many of the islands and countries in the Indian Ocean that you cannot buy an airline ticket one way to any place. You must buy a roundtrip ticket, and if you only use one half the ticket you are entitled to a refund in some amount. We are collecting lots of unused airline tickets and sure hope it is true we will get refunds. So far we had very little success in getting any money back on unused tickets."

"We operated here in the CQ World Wide contest on CW and made over 2,000 contacts. The pile ups on the air are enormous when you are the only station in a rare DX location."

"Everyone asks, 'Where are you going next?' At this moment we are not sure, but keep watching for us on the air. We will be on from another country very soon."

Shortly after the New Year another note arrived from Iris/W6QL postmarked from the Republique Federale Islamique Des Comoros advising that they were able to get an amateur license to operate from the Comoros Islands in the Indian Ocean. Lloyd/W6KG and Iris made some 9,000 QSO's with amateurs in 152 countries as D68QL. Iris said they completed their Comoros operation on December 30th.

"There are only two other licensed amateurs in this country: Bill/D68WB and Alain/D68AM. D68WB is an American doctor who has been here for the past 10 years and was a great help to us. He is associated with a missionary group here, all of whom assisted us in many ways."

"The procedure to obtain a license includes a meeting and approval of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Comoros Islands. It cost \$160 American Dollars for our licenses, which is the highest that we have ever paid. This is not very much, however, when compared to other prices here. For example, two Coca-Colas cost six American Dollars."

"Our tri-band antenna was in an excellent location on the shore of the Indian Ocean with two guys secured to a rock actually in the Indian Ocean. We were inspected twice by local police who kept saying 'Who are you sending messages to?'"

"The weather is very hot and humid and, for the first time ever, we really enjoyed having air conditioning available. Usually we disconnect the air conditioning unit and connect our radio to that electric current."

"There is no QSL Bureau in the Comoros, so everyone must QSL to: YASME, P.O. Box 2025, Castro Valley, CA 94546."

WEEKEND HAM RADIO CLASSES SCHEDULED

Recipient of ARRL's Instructor of the Year award Gordon West, WB6NOA, of Costa Mesa, California, recently announced a new series of weekend ham classes for beginners and those who wish to upgrade. Classes start in March at Coastline Community College. West formed the weekend classes expressly for candidates of the new Enhanced Novice Voice Class license which everyone seems confident will be announced by then.

A complete code and theory program will encompass over 20 hours of accelerated instruction. West says he "isn't taking a short cut in teaching newcomers — we are simply focusing on licensing, the successful passing of the examination, and operating skills of a good amateur radio operator." [Further details available by calling (714) 549-5000 between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. any weekday.]

Gordo also publishes A.I.R. (Amateur Industry Report) WAVES - a newsletter geared to those in the amateur radio business. West, who has been pushing for regular ham industry meetings, said the next industry get-together could take place on February 6th, (8 p.m., Ramada Airport Hotel) before the (Miami) Tropical Hamboree. He would like to see another meeting held on March 12th in Orlando, Florida. The industry's traditional meeting is scheduled for Thursday evening, April 23rd, 7:30 p.m. at Imperial House North prior to the Dayton HamVention.

● Ever since Paul Rinaldo, W4RI, left to work full time with the ARRL, the Amateur Radio Research and Development Corporation, has more or less suffered as attested to in a recent AMRAD editorial. Their monthly newsletter will now be issued 4-6 times a year. AMRAD is a worldwide club of over 500 amateur and computer experimenters.

● A recent FCC ruling has given a boost to high power Ku-band DBS broadcasting by making it more attractive to potential investors. The Commission has authorized the 12.2-12.7 ghz direct broadcasting band to also be used for fixed satellite services - voice and data distribution. DBS satellites will now have more value than simply being a video satellite. DBS broadcasters must reduce fixed service use to 50% after five years at which time satellite video programming should have had time to catch on.

● Satellite programming at present consists of low power (45 watt) C-band programming to massive backyard earth stations. Higher power and 9 degree satellite spacing is needed in the Ku-band to compensate for weather and interference. The planned 16-channel DBS system will comprise two satellites with sixteen 100-watt per channel transponders broadcasting to two-foot antennas.

● The Direct Broadcast Satellite Corporation has now been granted a new DBS license after relinquishing a previous one in 1985. Nine companies now hold licenses to build direct broadcast satellites. There is even retailer interest in direct-to-home shopping services! Cable interests are very concerned since high quality DBS programming can be delivered nationwide at a lower cost than wiring a city.

● 1200 television broadcasters are worried that the FCC could preclude terrestrial delivery of high-definition television by awarding more UHF-TV spectrum to the Land Mobile Services. In a recent speech, NAB president Eddie Fritts said "If those frequencies are gone, broadcasting will be unable to provide HDTV while its competitors can." It takes 8.1 MHz of spectrum for a terrestrial HDTV channel. The FCC said that they are not convinced that the UHF-TV band would be the HDTV band of choice adding that cable-TV, video-disk, videotape and particularly direct-to-home satellite broadcasting would be better suited since they have no bandwidth problems.

● Giant AT&T isn't saying, but it appears that U.S. Sprint and MCI can offer quality long distance telephone service at a lower cost than they can. They plan to close some plants, eliminate 27,000 jobs and take a \$3.2 billion write-off which will just about wipe

out 1986 after tax earnings. Chairman James Olson was quoted as saying "This is no longer the old, stable monopoly business." AT&T has eliminated 75,000 jobs since Bell System break up. AT&T Information (computer) Services lost nearly \$1 billion this past year. IBM seems to be having somewhat of a problem competing in the marketplace also. They pared 10,000 jobs in 1986.

● Time to collect your outstanding VISA/-MasterCards! Home Shopping Network (HSN) and MCA-TV will jointly produce "The Home Shopping Game Show". The weekly taped show will be produced by Home Shopping Entertainment and (Ken) Kragen & Company. Kragen, the master promoter, produced the "We Are The World", "USA for Africa" and "Hands Across America" fundraisers this past summer (with thousands of ham operators providing free communications support.) Game show format: contestants win money, viewers purchase products by calling a toll free number, HSN delivers the goods. The Home Shopping Game will be hosted by Dean Goss, former announcer on "Let's Make a Deal." It will debut this September. HSN predicts the half hour syndicated game show will move \$1 billion worth of goods!

● HSN reported its sales jumped 319% for the quarter ended November 30. (\$103.5 million vs. \$24.7 million a year earlier.) Profits climbed to \$9.5 million from \$2.7. HSN's shopping service is now available in 26 million homes served by broadcast television stations and 15 million of the 38 million U.S. cable and satellite dish homes. HSN has bought seven UHF stations and is programming 24-hour shopping on them! They will shortly add three more (Cleveland, Philadelphia and Chicago) making ten. HSN says they have applications from 120 stations to become affiliates!

● Airfone, the company that offers air-to-ground telephone service for commercial airline passengers has been bought by GTE Corp. Airfone is currently operating on a developmental license and is attempting to obtain a permanent spectrum allocation.

● Look for AT&T to expand into the voice storage and retrieval and telephone answering business. It will put thousands of individually-owned answering services out of business!

● January PC milestones. Jack Tramiel resigned from Commodore on January 20, 1984 - a company he founded 20 years earlier - and buys floundering Atari. Four days later Apple unveils the Macintosh, the first personal computer with 3½" disks and a curser "mouse". Lotus 1-2-3, the software that changed the direction of the personal computer software industry, was introduced on January 28, 1983.

● Comsat appears to be back in the consumer DBS business again. They plan to buy out 50% interest in HI-Net Communications from its Memphis partner, Holiday Corp. The year-old venture now provides multi-channel Ku-band satellite TV entertainment to 1,000 Holiday Inn Hotels. Through its STC subsidiary (Satellite Television Corp.) which shut down in 1984, Comsat plans to expand to other hotel chain operations and eventually offer the service directly to private homes.

● Ronald Reagan's Fiscal 1988 Budget (released by the Office of Management and Budget just last week) provides for \$600 million in deficit reduction through the use of currently unassigned private radio and satellite spectrum sale. The FCC has long advocated an airwave auction - although they wanted the funds realized to be kept within the telecommunications industry. Any additional cellular radio spectrum allocated could also be subject to the auction proposal. Gone will be the days when investors can apply for free radio spectrum and then resell it in the marketplace for billions! The 900-MHz ham band takes on a new importance! FCC Chairman Mark Fowler thinks one megahertz at that level (if sold to industry) is worth anywhere from \$50 to \$200 million! The Amateur Radio Service has 26 megahertz allocated to it between 902 and 928 Mhz! (Very big bucks!)

● Determined to "make the FCC the best run agency in the Federal government," the FCC's Managing Director, Edward J. Minkel, has circulated an Open Letter to Friends of the FCC soliciting suggestions on how the FCC might further streamline its procedures, speed up work processes, improve service to the public and further turn over FCC functions to the private sector. He also requests ideas that can be implemented at little or no cost and those which will reduce future expenses. Send to: FCC, Managing Director, 1919 M Street N.W., Washington, DC 20554.

● Motorola has introduced a "Personal Message Receiver", basically a combination pager and information service. The PMR2000 has four mail drop memories to allow users to gather constantly updated information. It can store up to 16 messages and an optional printer is available. Motorola envisions that the PMR2000 will be used for such areas as lottery selections, restaurant reviews, movie ratings, news bulletins, off track betting, weather and traffic reports.

● The big story in 1986 consumer electronics was video programming. Video shopping caught on big ...with investors as well as viewers. Backyard dish owners got used to the idea that they would have to pay for the programming they used to get free, and PPV - Pay-Per-View - showing signs of eventually being very big. There are now 11.8 million addressable homes.

● And did you get a Christmas present from your cable-TV company? If you didn't get a rate hike of between 5% and 20%, you will shortly! December 29th is D-Day (De-regulation Day) ...the day that cable companies may no longer be regulated by state or local governments. They can charge whatever the market will bear. Be on the lookout for repackaged services that are really rate hikes.

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AMATEUR SPECTRUM VULNERABLE....

Between January 27th and March 13th, the International Telecommunication Union is holding a WARC in Geneva on High Frequency Broadcasting. This is the second planning session of the conference ...the first being held a few years ago. During the interim period, the various countries were to have submitted their requirements for high frequency broadcasting channels to the ITU.

Many countries have submitted more requirements than can be handled in the presently allocated frequency bands. At this point it looks impossible that these needs can be filled by the ITU.

There has been some informal discussion about developing and adopting a resolution at this conference that would call for a future conference to completely re-allocate the high frequency bands.

In the high frequency portion you have primarily the Broadcasting, Amateur and Fixed and Mobile services. A highly placed government official (who asked that he not be named) recently told me that hf broadcasters would be looking for more spectrum since they do not have enough now and "the amateur bands would be extremely vulnerable at a future allocations conference. They could wipe out what was given in (the last WARC in) 1979. The chairman of the U.S. delegation is a lawyer, Mr. Leonard Marx. There is no amateur representation on the delegation. It is a precarious situation"

Also criticized was the fact that at a recent IARU (International Amateur Radio Union) meeting in Buenos Aires - valuable time was spent trying to determine a way to standardize the way QSL cards are filled out rather than addressing the hf broadcast WARC and its possible detrimental effect on amateur spectrum.

Most ham bands could come under attack since they have international broadcast allocations close to them. The present short-wave broadcast bands (in MHz) are as follows:

120 meter 2.300-2.495	90 meter 3.200-3.500
60 meter 4.700-5.600	49 meter 5.950-6.200
31 meter 9.500-9.980	22 meter 13.60-13.80
19 meter 15.10-15.60	16 meter 17.40-17.90
13 meter 21.45-21.75	11 meter 25.67-26.10

BRITISH PIRATE RADIO STATION RETURNS

Do you remember the piece we did on "Laser 558", the British pirate ship (the M.V. Communicator) that illegally broadcasts pop music to the United Kingdom anchored in international waters off Britain's east coast? They were forced off the air during a storm more than a year ago and towed into port by a surveillance vessel of the British DTI (Department of Trade and Industry - similar to our FCC). The DTI had blockaded the vessel and once towed into port, the American DJ's were given one month to leave the country.

The floating pirate radio station returned to the airwaves last month on a new (illegal, of course) AM frequency of 570. The M.V. Communicator was sold for \$50,000 by the British government to a Panamanian firm, Cord Cabo SA. Little did they expect the

vessel to be refurbished (at a cost of some \$250,000) and put back to sea to broadcast illegally once again. The ship has several new studios on board and a new deep sea anchor system.

Laser 570's headquarters is in New York, but its advertising agency - called Radio Waves is right here in Dallas. (Ad rates are \$1,750 for a package of 35 - 30 second commercials.)

The pirate pop station reaches millions and is supplied by ships from Spain - a non-signer of the European Economic Community agreement on pirate radio. It is a crime under the Marine Broadcasting Offenses Act of 1967 to assist a broadcasting station operating from the high seas.

Laser 570 is anchored 17 miles off the coast of Essex and one mile away from another pirate radio ship, Radio Caroline that has been operating some two decades.

HOME DISH SATELLITE BIZ HEATS UP!

Comments are pouring into the FCC on whether the Commission should impose regulations on the reception of satellite signals by backyard earth stations. The FCC opened the inquiry (Docket 86-336) at the direction of Congress. At issue is whether home dish owners have "reasonable access to satellite programming at competitive prices."

Broadcast comments generally say that interception of network feeds violates privacy and contracts among networks, while dish antenna owner groups maintain that the present "marketplace system" is not working. They want a hearing and a full investigation. STVRC (Satellite Television Viewing Rights Coalition) said that network service can not be brought to all regions and there is "no evidence that viewing of network feeds transmitted by satellite and viewable by home satellite antenna viewers has caused any harm."

It appears that the VideoCipher II satellite descrambler has been broken - if only temporarily. While General Instrument Corp's VideoCipher Division "officially" denies the system has been compromised, insiders tell us that GI is prepared to launch an all-out attack on anti-scramblers using innovative "technological weapons."

Each VideoCipher II has a distinct "address" enabling programmers to authorize each VC-II specific services. Two systems of defeating VC-II's apparently exist. "Cloning" involves extracting the address data from a descrambler authorized to receive all scrambled programming and placing it on an IC chip which changes the address to that of the master chip!

There are at least 12 sources of "master chips" which are substituted for the one in a user's VC-II. The problem is if the "master" quits paying his bills and gets turned off - so does all the clones. General Instrument (new owner of M/A Com's VC-II technology) is onto this scam and quietly is purchasing the pirate chips. At some point, all master code's will be "de-authorized."

Another method of defeating the VideoCipher II is by the "Three Musketeer" (all-for-one) E-PROM chip sold by two Canadian firms - one in Alberta, another in Ottawa. You purchase one service and get all the rest for free! General Instrument can also disable "musketeer" chips by changing the encoded signals it sends to the descramblers to tell them what to receive and what not to.

Satellite dealers can even go into the business of making illegal VC-II receiving chips by purchasing a "clone operation kit" for \$3,000 to \$6,000. GI has plans to crack down on illegal VC-II's by invoking provisions of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 which outlaws equipment used for illegal descrambling.

The January 5th issue of Multichannel News said that Keith Lamonica's (W7DXX) "FM America" advocates the use of illegal chips and provides viewers with phone numbers to order the chips at \$250 each. The chips are supposedly "sold for educational purposes only." Stand by for action ...soon! General Instrument says there has not been an attack that has not been anticipated!

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RF RADIATION GUIDELINES DISCUSSED....

Although broadcasters favor an RFR (radio frequency radiation) standard that would preempt local RFR guidelines, Richard A. Tell (K5UJU of Las Vegas, NV, and Chief, Electromagnetics Branch of the EPA's Office

of Radiation Programs) says there is virtually no chance that any new guidelines adopted would have precedence over local regulations.

The EPA has been receiving comments on four alternatives suggested for a national RFR exposure level. Members of working groups considering a revision of the ANSI (American National Standards Institute) RFR guidelines met last month in Las Vegas. The discussions were held in preparation for a June 1987 ANSI standards meeting in Portland, Oregon, when the RFR standards will be submitted for ratification.

The present ANSI RFR standard recommends a maximum power density exposure limit of 1 milliwatt per square centimeter on a 6 minute time averaged basis. Two new ANSI standards are being discussed - one for the general population, another for industrial workers.

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FM BROADCAST NEIGHBOR TO HAM RADIO?

It could happen! The FCC has announced that it will process the 40 daytime AM broadcast station applications now under consideration, but will accept no new ones. The AM band is simply too crowded. Of the over 10,000 AM broadcast radio stations on the air - 2,200 are daytime only.

AM's share of the radio audience continues to shrink. About 70% of the nation's radio listeners tune to the present interference-free FM band between 88 and 108 MHz. - something that AMers are well aware of! The FCC has a backlog of 1,700 applications for new FM stations.

AM daytime radio station, WRNJ, ("Radio New Jersey") has petitioned the FCC to create a new FM broadcast band between 225 and 230 MHz - just above the 220-225 MHz ham band - to be called "FM2". WRNJ proposes that AM daytimers be authorized to move to the FM2 band with fulltime operation.

The 225-230 MHz band is currently allocated to the Fixed and Mobile Service in Region 2, but is shared with Broadcasting in other parts of the world. RNJ has requested that they be authorized to construct an experimental FM broadcast station on 227.5 MHz in Hackettstown, N. J.